

level where in turn information in the RPA Program flows back to the forest level.

(b) *Planning levels and relationships—*

(1) *National.* The Chief of the Forest Service shall develop the Renewable Resources Assessment and Program (hereafter, “RPA Assessment and RPA Program”) according to sections 3 and 4 of the RPA.

(i) *RPA Assessment.* The RPA Assessment shall include analysis of present and anticipated uses, demand for, and supply of the renewable resources of forest, range, and other associated lands with consideration of, and an emphasis on, pertinent supply, demand, and price relationship trends; an inventory of present and potential renewable resources and an evaluation of opportunities for improving their yield of tangible and intangible goods and services, together with estimates of investment costs and direct and indirect returns to the Federal Government; a description of Forest Service programs and responsibilities in research, cooperative programs, and management of the National Forest System; and analysis of important policy issues and consideration of laws, regulations, and other factors expected to influence and affect significantly the use, ownership, and management of forest, range, and other associated lands. The RPA Assessment shall be based on the future capabilities of forest and rangelands and shall include information generated during the regional, forest, and other planning processes.

(ii) *RPA Program.* The RPA Program shall consider the costs of supply and the relative values of both market and nonmarket outputs. The alternatives considered shall include national renewable resource goals and quantified objectives for resource outputs and other benefits and shall be designed to represent a range of expenditure levels sufficient to demonstrate full opportunities for management. A portion of each national objective developed in the RPA Program shall be distributed to each region and be incorporated into each regional guide. Resource objectives shall be tentatively selected for each forest planning area. In formulating the objectives for each region and forest planning area, local supply

capabilities and market conditions will be considered.

(2) *Regional.* Each Regional Forester shall develop a regional guide. Regional guides shall establish regional standards and guidelines as required by §219.9(a). Consistent with resource capabilities, regional guides shall reflect goals and objectives of the RPA Program. For planning purposes, the regional guides shall display tentative resource objectives for each Forest from the RPA Program. Regional guides shall also provide for general coordination of National Forest System, State and Private Forestry (S&PF), and Research programs. The Chief shall approve the regional guide. The Regional Forester may request adjustment of assigned regional objectives. Any adjustment shall require the approval of the Chief, Forest Service.

(3) *Forest.* Each Forest Supervisor shall develop a forest plan for administrative units of the National Forest System. One forest plan may be prepared for all lands for which a Forest Supervisor has responsibility; or separate forest plans may be prepared for each National Forest, or combination of National Forests, within the jurisdiction of a single Forest Supervisor. A single forest plan may be prepared for the entire Tongass National Forest. These forest plans shall constitute the land and resource management plans as required under sections 6 and 13 of the RPA. A range of resource objectives shall be formulated as alternatives and evaluated, including at least one alternative which responds to and incorporates the tentative RPA Program resource objectives displayed in the regional guide. Based on this evaluation, the Forest Supervisor shall recommend objectives for incorporation into the forest plan to the Regional Forester. The Regional Forester shall approve the forest plan. This approval may incorporate adjustment of the tentative RPA Program resource objectives displayed in the regional guide.

§219.5 Interdisciplinary approach.

(a) A team representing several disciplines shall be used for regional and forest planning to insure coordinated planning of the various resources.

Forest Service, USDA

§219.6

Through interactions among its members, the team shall integrate knowledge of the physical, biological, economic and social sciences, and the environmental design arts in the planning process. The team shall consider problems collectively, rather than separating them along disciplinary lines. Team functions include, but are not limited to—

- (1) Assessing the problems and resource use and development opportunities associated with providing goods and services;
- (2) Obtaining the public's views about possible decisions;
- (3) Implementing the planning coordination activities within the Forest Service and with local, State and other Federal agencies;
- (4) Developing a broad range of alternatives which identify the benefits and costs of land and resource management according to the planning process described in this subpart.
- (5) Developing the land and resource management plan and associated environmental impact statement required pursuant to the planning process;
- (6) Presenting to the responsible line officer an integrated perspective on land and resource management planning; and
- (7) Establishing the standards and requirements by which planning and management activities will be monitored and evaluated.

(b) In appointing team members, the responsible line officer shall determine and consider the qualifications of each team member on the basis of the complexity of the issues and concerns to be addressed through the plan. The team shall collectively represent diverse specialized areas of professional and technical knowledge applicable to the planning area, and the team members shall have recognized relevant expertise and experience in professional, investigative, scientific, or other responsible work in specialty areas which they collectively represent. The team may consist of whatever combination of Forest Service staff and other Federal government personnel is necessary to achieve an interdisciplinary approach. The team is encouraged to consult other persons when required specialized knowledge does not exist within the

team itself. In addition to technical knowledge in one or more resource specialties, members should possess other attributes which enhance the interdisciplinary process. As a minimum, these attributes should include—

- (1) An ability to solve complex problems;
- (2) Skills in communication and group interaction;
- (3) Basic understanding of land and natural resource planning concepts, processes, and analysis techniques; and
- (4) The ability to conceptualize planning problems and feasible solutions.

§219.6 Public participation.

(a) Because the land and resource management planning process determines how the lands of the National Forest System are to be managed, the public is encouraged to participate throughout the planning process. The intent of public participation is to—

- (1) Broaden the information base upon which land and resource management planning decisions are made;
- (2) Ensure that the Forest Service understands the needs, concerns, and values of the public;
- (3) Inform the public of Forest Service land and resource planning activities; and
- (4) Provide the public with an understanding of Forest Service programs and proposed actions.

(b) Public participation in the preparation of environmental impact statements for planning begins with the publication of a notice of intent in the FEDERAL REGISTER. Public involvement in the preparation of draft and final environmental impact statements shall conform to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act and associated implementing regulations and Forest Service Manual and Handbook guidance (hereafter, "NEPA procedures"). Public comments shall be analyzed according to NEPA procedures.

(c) Public participation activities, as deemed appropriate by the responsible line officer, shall be used early and often throughout the development of plans. Formal public participation activities will begin with a notice to the